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並不得書寫、畫記、作答。

國立清華大學 108 學年度碩士班考試入學試題

系所班組別：外國語文學系 乙組

考試科目(代碼)：英文閱讀與寫作(4003)

### — 作答注意事項 —

1. 請核對答案卷(卡)上之准考證號、科目名稱是否正確。
2. 作答中如有發現試題印刷不清，得舉手請監試人員處理，但不得要求解釋題意。
3. 考生限在答案卷上標記「由此開始作答」區內作答，且不可書寫姓名、准考證號或與作答無關之其他文字或符號。
4. 答案卷用盡不得要求加頁。
5. 答案卷可用任何書寫工具作答，惟為方便閱卷辨識，請儘量使用藍色或黑色書寫；答案卡限用 2B 鉛筆畫記；如畫記不清(含未依範例畫記)致光學閱讀機無法辨識答案者，其後果一律由考生自行負責。
6. 其他應考規則、違規處理及扣分方式，請自行詳閱准考證明上「國立清華大學試場規則及違規處理辦法」，無法因本試題封面作答注意事項中未列明而稱未知悉。

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**Directions:** The following passage is taken from a journal article written by Mark Pegrum. Please (1) summarize the article in 350 words (40%), and (2) write an essay in response to Pegrum's take on the promotional themes (the "key tropes") commonly found in the marketing of English. (60%)

For some time, a growing chorus of voices has been expressing concern over the way in which English is promoted by English-speaking countries, primarily the UK, the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand (cf. Phillipson 1992, Pennycook 1994 & 1998, Canagarajah 1999, Skutnabb-Kangas 2000). Identified by Kachru (1985) as the 'inner circle' countries, these make vast profits from linguistic sales to 'outer circle' countries such as Singapore and India—despite the fact that the latter have largely developed their own Englishes—and even more so to the 'expanding circle' of countries which require access to the default inter-national lingua franca.

## Monolithic tendencies, alternative perspectives

Unquestionably, English [...] brings advantages to many of those who learn it, as it does to those who sell it. Equally unquestionably, the advantages tend to be overstated by those with a vested interest in the promotion of English, while there is a downplaying of concomitant drawbacks: the erosion of community languages, identities and modes of interaction, the privileging of Western developmental models over local knowledges and the fostering of relationships of dependency (Dorian 1998, Hale 1998, Pennycook 1999, Crystal 2000, Skutnabb-Kangas 2000, Nettle & Romaine 2002). Perceptions of English are influenced by many factors, not the least of which is advertising which, with its knowing, encouraging smile, not only helps to shape the public face of ELT and reinforce the trust of students within the industry, but also, importantly, serves to buttress the beliefs of teachers and planners about the nature of the service they are offering. While no advertising can be expected to present a completely fair or unbiased picture, it is instructive to examine its underlying presuppositions: that is, the discourses which it both feeds and [...] feeds on.

This article surveys recent advertisements [...]. The advertisements, which target teachers, agents, students or a combination of these, have been sorted according to the primary underlying tropes on which they draw or which they promote. It will be seen that, despite differing target demographics, there is general thematic overlap, with many motifs surfacing more than once in varying guises and combinations. [...]

## Keyword: *Native*

'English in England!' proclaims an advertisement for the London-based Evendine College, while the University of Nevada at Reno invites students to 'Study English and Live the Language ...' There is nothing atypical, apart from an initial decapitalised letter, about the

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advertising of a textbook entitled *natural English* by Oxford University Press, nor in the promotion by the same publisher of its dictionaries as 'The unbeatable collection for more natural, expressive English'. A 'natural' corollary of this focus on the English of native speakers is the appeal to tradition, particularly, though not unexpectedly, in the country with the longest English-speaking history: 'British Education, British Quality' declares an advertisement for member institutions of BASELT (the British Association of State English Language Teaching), while OUP stresses the heritage of 'The original and the best Advanced Learner's Dictionary', and concludes: 'Accept no imitations.' [...]

Despite the work of Kachru (1985 & 1986, Kachru & Nelson 2001) and others (Crystal 1997, McArthur 1998) in problematizing the 'ownership of English' (Widdowson 1994), Englishes from beyond the inner circle are generally silent, from an advertising point of view, in these publications from the heartland of ELT. Nowhere is there an invitation to learn Indian or Singaporean English which, despite their increasing codification, tacitly bow to exonormative standards, or at least do not compete in this arena; nowhere do the burgeoning Euro-English (McArthur 2003a, Modiano 2003) or ELF (English as a Lingua Franca: Seidlhofer 2001) find their way into this publicity. There is little room for the notion that most of those learning English today will rarely have occasion to use it with a native speaker (Kachru & Nelson 2001:18). Also conspicuously absent, after years of promotion of concepts of intercultural competence (Buttjes & Byram 1991, Byram 1997, McBride & Seago 2000, Byram, Nichols & Stevens 2001) and the intercultural speaker (Byram & Zarate 1997, Kramersch 1998), is any hint of the acceptability, much less the desirability, of the kind of hybridity, code-switching, and linguistic and cultural mobility which is the norm for multilingual populations (McArthur 1998, Canagarajah 1999 & 2002).

Understandably, advertisers of the original or 'pure' product have no interest in acknowledging divergent or hybrid products; yet educators must be aware of the insinuation of myths of purity into everyday views of language, and the power differentials they may disguise. [...]

## Keyword: *Modernity*

In a turnabout on the trope of tradition, the majority of advertisers in fact prefer to look to the future, plugging into what Phillipson (1992:247) has called the association of English 'with the new gods of efficiency, science and technology, modernity, etc'. Most often, a mere sampling of lexis from the semantic field of novelty is sufficient to conjure up the requisite connotations, indicating how deep-rooted they are—as in the many advertisements for new/brand-new/modern dictionaries, by such publishers as Cambridge University Press and Macmillan, or a billing of LanguEdge Courseware as 'the future of TOEFL testing'.

Of particular note is Longman's ingenious series of advertisements for its *Dictionary of Contemporary English*, which foreground appropriate lexical items accompanied by definitions, thereby reinforcing particular semantic-ideational links between the English

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language and the publisher's product: one example takes its cue from the keyword 'innovation', defined as 'a new idea, method, or invention that is better than those that existed before' and illustrated by the phrase 'Recent innovations in English teaching'. [...]

While stressing novelty is a common device in advertising in many domains, in the context of ELT it is easily co-opted, knowingly or otherwise, into the shadowy service of powerful underlying discourses. The tendency, especially but not only in the developing world, to link English to Phillipson's 'new gods' and to hyperbolise the association of local languages with the old gods, with tradition and personal issues, risks establishing a diabolical dichotomy (Pennycook 1999:7) which at the very least may lead to linguistic atrophy in local languages, [...] and beyond this to the kind of functional marginalisation of diversity and multilingualism [...].

### **Keyword: *Self-Development***

Both 'development' and its prefixed form 'self-development' inform much of the advertising of ELT and both, on the face of it, have much to recommend them. Still, 'development' is linked to concepts of modernity and modernisation, and its automatic and unreflective association with English may entail similar liabilities, as Kashoki notes: 'Africans have been psychologically conditioned to believe that only European languages are structured to aid development' (cited in Phillipson 1992:286).

Perhaps the greatest hazard, however, lies in the slippage between the terms 'development' and 'self-development'. The positive potential of each notwithstanding, they are not the same; the latter may, and often does, imply 'individual or group escape rather than systemic change' (Pennycook 1999:2). The developmental promise of ELT often tacitly targets—and is best received by—those who wish to escape, as individuals, from limited and limiting life conditions. Small wonder that it appeals to able or advantaged individuals in poorer societies. Small wonder that parents demand access to English for their children: a recent survey of a thousand Chinese ESL students showed that their prime motivation was 'their parents' desire or their own desire for an improved economic future' (Qiang & Wolff, 2003:10). Small wonder that English, by metonymic association with the processes to which it can open the gates, has itself become a status symbol. [...]

'Go further' proclaims an IELTS advertisement, as does—coincidentally but significantly—an OUP advertisement for the *New Headway* textbook series. 'Get ahead' suggests the Study Group of institutions (providers of English language training along with other programmes). You can 'Study English and achieve your goals' through Kaplan International, while the English courses at Canada's Columbia International College offer 'Your Passport to the World', and the Australian Government's 'Study in Australia' campaign [...] promises 'Your future. Your world'.

Development schemes, if implemented collaboratively with full respect for local conditions, can bring many benefits; as can, in other ways, the personal endeavour towards self-

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development. But ensuring that 'self-development' feeds into and is seen in the broader context of 'development' is paramount, otherwise we are effectively promising access to the material benefits of capitalism for the few, while neglecting the many. English needs to be more than a privileged escape route. An advertisement for the Educational Testing Service (ETS) reads: 'Prepare your TOEFL and ESL students for their biggest challenge. Life.' Our challenge, as educators and planners, is to ensure that 'development' and 'self-development' remain—and are perceived by students as—compatible.

**Keyword: Individualism**

[...] it is clear that a liberal concept of individualism underlies much ELT advertising, whether high-lighting self-development or life experiences, even if it is rarely mentioned by name. A notable exception, aimed at teachers rather than learners, is a prominent advertisement entitled 'Teach English and Individualism' which the British Council has run over many months:

At the British Council we aim to employ English language teachers from a mix of backgrounds and ages. In this way we'll send out signals that in Britain we believe in the right of individuals to pursue their particular lifestyle.

This efficiently targets new candidates for a profession peopled largely by liberal individuals open to experiencing the world and ready to propagate abroad a similar, perhaps unintentionally idealised, vision of their compatriots at home.

Never mind that this may be in conflict with the commercial interests of those materials designers whose aim is never to cause offence to potential buyers and who therefore promote a bland, money-driven ELT textbook culture (Gray 2002), [...]. Never mind that real individualism may be in conflict with institutional requirements, including those of the British Council; more significantly, it is also potentially at odds with students' beliefs.

Individualism is an attitude and a pursuit, often an expensive one, common to late modern societies, but is far from being a cultural ideal worldwide. Zuo Biao (2001:5) notes that '[f]or most Westerners, individualism is undoubtedly a positive core value' [...] while in China '[a]n individual in isolation has no meaningful existence'; despite imported values, he says, community remains core. [...]

This does not mean that individualism is inappropriate as an ideal or a lifestyle, nor that Western educators should not stand by their cultural codes, nor that a methodology centred on student autonomy and empowerment is inherently unsound, but that it is necessary to guard against a blithe cultural imperialism in attempting to 'teach individualism': after all, not all students may be as keen to 'learn individualism' as their teachers are to propagate it.

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### Keyword: *Product*

For Naysmith (1987:3), English is ‘the language of international capitalism’, while Canagarajah (1999: 173) describes it as ‘a coveted linguistic capital’. Perhaps, given the role of economic power in maintaining a dominant language (Crystal, 1997), and the linkage of English with the ongoing economic processes of globalisation, it is not surprising that the language itself has become the ultimate commodity, at least for those who are lucky enough to possess exportable quantities of this ‘natural’ resource.

The slogan ‘Another job well done’, accompanied by a large tick, advertises OUP’s textbook *Business Vision*, while the University of Michigan Press announces: ‘Academic success ... it’s in the bag!’ Language is portrayed as a discrete product which can be acquired ‘Fast!’, as Longman’s advertisement for its *Powerbase* series indicates. Indeed, fast food springs to mind: ‘one stop English’ is promoted by Macmillan, while Longman announces ‘No time? No problem!’—the reason being its *Language to go* series. Presumably this slogan would be equally appropriate for *Grammar Express*, advertised elsewhere by the same publisher.

Stylistically hip, this advertising plays on the image of a cash-and convenience-rich but time-poor stratum of society, its smooth patina designed to appeal to an affluent, upwardly-mobile demographic. However, just as fast food restaurants tend not to promote traditions of *haute cuisine* or enrichment of life through lingering appreciation of food, it downplays the richness of both native English traditions and intercultural communication in favour of a functional, instrumental, even ‘material’ approach to language, thus hooking up with the ‘getting ahead’ metaphor seen earlier. This is certainly one aspect of English which will catch the attention of potential students wishing to escape traditional societies and identities, but, on the other hand, such a strong message risks putting off those who are unsettled by the bland cosmopolitanism of neoliberal capitalism. [...]

### Images of English

English is an asset belonging to its native speakers, who are free to market and sell it; it is an all but inevitable concomitant of modernisation, globalisation, self-development and a cosmopolitan enjoyment of life; it requires deference to Western ideals of individualism, open discussion and, ultimately, global citizenship: these are some of the key tropes of English to be found in the advertising examined in this article. While none is completely false or impossible, none is entirely or indisputably true, either. The peril inherent in the human tendency to structure reality linguistically and metaphorically lies always in what is hidden, in the propensity of discourses pretending to dominance to suppress other equally viable discourses, driving alternatives underground.[...]

While the discourses elucidated in this article are particularly clear in advertising, they are not limited to it, but along with a number of variants broadly inform public and academic discussion about ELT. It is our responsibility as educators (to ourselves, our profession, and most of all our students) to ensure that commonplace tropes are closely examined to reveal

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both the value of all and the limitations of each. English does bring benefits. But these will be most clearly perceived by those who can deconstruct the discourses woven around it, to arrive at a balanced appreciation of what it gives, and what it may also take away.

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(References deleted for space considerations)

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Passage taken from:

Pegrum, M. (2004). Selling English: Advertising and the discourses of ELT. *English Today*, 20(1), 3-10.